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A SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY

THE DEATH

OF THE

REV. THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, M. A.,

PREACHED AT THE CHAPEL IN ESSEX STREET,

STRAND, NOVEMBER 13TH, 1808:

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR:

BY

THOMAS BELSHAM,

MINISTER OF THE CHAPEL.

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"HEAR ME, AT LEAST, OH! HEAR ME FROM THE GRAVE." *Dr. Trapp.*

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1808.

TO THE

CONGREGATION OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIPERS,

AT THE CHAPEL IN ESSEX STREET,

THIS LAST MOURNFUL TRIBUTE

OF AFFECTION AND DUTY

TO THEIR REVERED FOUNDER,

WHOSE DOCTRINE

MAY THEY FROM CONVICTION EMBRACE!

WHOSE VIRTUES

MAY THEY CLOSELY IMITATE!

AND

IN WHOSE FINAL REWARD

MAY IT BE THEIR HAPPINESS TO PARTAKE!

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS TOO UNWORTHY SUCCESSOR;

BUT THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND

AND DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

School of Theology
at Claremont

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A FUNERAL SERMON,

FOR

THE REV. THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, M.A.

Upon the present mournful occasion, I know not, my fellow Christians, to what subject I can with more propriety invite your attention, than to one which our late venerable friend has left upon record, as explaining the motive of his conduct, and expressing the great object of his desire and hope in the most interesting and trying scene of his life. It is written,

Matthew xxv. 23. *Well done, thou good and faithful servant,——enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

"To leave a station of ease and affluence," saith this most excellent and truly apostolical confessor, in his Farewell Address to his parishi-

oners at Catterick, "and to have to combat with various straits and hardships of an uncertain world, affords but a dark prospect. But we must willingly submit to this hard lot when not to be avoided without deserting our duty to God and his truth. And we have great encouragement given us by our divine master and saviour Christ. Matt. x. 32. 'Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father, who is in heaven.' And Mark x. 29. 'Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that has left house, or brethren, or sister, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.'" He adds, "It is of small concern in what outward circumstances we pass over the short term of life, if we can but obtain that blessed approbation in the end, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord**."

* Farewell Address, p. 12.

The present life is a school of education, in which the intellectual powers and moral principles are gradually unfolded, and in which, by various processes of mental discipline, human beings are trained to immortality. The tendency of the dispensations of divine providence with respect to individuals is to extend the views, and to enlarge the comprehension of the mind, to transfer the attention from sensible to intellectual objects, from less to greater, from the present to the future, and so to associate, and, if I may so express it, to amalgamate the joys and sorrows of the present instant with distant objects, and with things past and to come, as in a considerable degree to absorb their influence, and to correct and modify their effects. The consequence is, that present sensations often possess very little efficacy either in deciding the judgement or directing the choice; and the external impression of the moment, though in itself vivid, frequently contributes in a very small proportion to the complex asso-

ciated feeling whether of pleasure or pain. This effect the discipline of life produces in all cases to a certain extent. There is no person advanced to maturity, and in full possession of his rational powers, who is not habitually more governed by ideal considerations, than by sensible impressions; or, in other words, who is not in his general conduct in life more influenced by his hopes and fears, by a sense of right and wrong, and by a regard to character, self-interest, and expectations of various kinds, than to the mere stimulus of present feelings of pleasure or pain. A man of common sense would be ashamed even to be suspected of the contrary. And such conduct, if in any case practicable, would exclude the individual who would be capable of it from human society, and would degrade him to the level of an infant, an idiot, or a brute.

But this effect of the discipline of divine providence is produced in the highest degree and to the most beneficial purpose in minds

that are the most enlightened and the best disposed, in persons of the highest intellectual talents and attainments, of the deepest reflection and the most comprehensive views, who can combine the largest extent of the future and the past with the present, and can represent them to the mind with the most commanding influence; whose hearts are vividly impressed, and powerfully affected by moral considerations, and especially by those views of the divine character and government, and of the present state and future expectations of man, which are exhibited in the christian revelation. These are the persons of whom it may be said in the sublimest sense of the words, that "they walk by faith and not by sight;" and hence the world has with great propriety and beauty been called "a nursery for great minds*."

The mind of man is the child of education, of discipline, of circumstances, of impressions

* See Dr. Priestley's incomparable Dedication of his Illustrations of the Doctrine of Necessity to Dr. Jebb.

from without and from within, from instruction, from example, from admonition, from encouragement, from reading and reflection, and from the pleasing or painful occurrences of human life.

Not indeed that all minds are constructed of the same materials, or that their original organization is equally perfect. Facts prove the contrary. For though it cannot be admitted, either, on the one hand, with the pleasing speculations of a benevolent philosophy, that mankind are born with an instinctive propensity to virtue, or, on the other, with the miserable dogmas of a gloomy theology, that infants are brought into the world loaded with guilt and tainted to the very core with sin, yet, neither can it be maintained with any appearance of probability, that all minds are originally equal, and that the difference between man and man in intellectual and moral attainments however considerable, is the sole result of education and mental discipline. It is an obvious

fact, that of children who are placed in circumstances precisely similar, and who enjoy the same means of instruction, the proficiency is widely different. One excells in memory, another in imagination, and a third in judgement. One soon learns, and soon forgets. Another learns slowly, and remembers long. Another excells in every faculty, in quickness of apprehension, in tenaciousness of memory, in readiness of recollection, in acuteness of discrimination, and with the utmost facility he outstrips his companions and competitors who possess equal advantages, and who apply with greater assiduity and perseverance.

Also, in the moral progress of mankind the difference is equally obvious. In children of the same family who have been educated with the same care, instructed in the same virtuous principles, subjected to the same prudent discipline, and spectators of the same edifying examples, one will, by his integrity and piety, by his active benevolence and his moral worth,

amply reward all the affectionate solicitude, and the vigilant exertions of his parents and instructors, and will become a blessing to society; while another, by a contrary disposition and conduct, will defeat the purpose and wound the feelings of his virtuous friends, and will involve himself and all who are connected with him in disgrace and ruin.

Nevertheless, though much must be allowed to the intellectual and moral constitution of human nature, it is still true, and it is a truth of the highest practical importance, that the human character is in a great degree the creature of education. By education that which is crooked may be made straight, and that which is originally correct may by early impressions and associations be warped and bended. Wholesome discipline, wise instruction, good example, a judicious mixture of indulgence and restraint, virtuous and interesting society, trials which exercise and invigorate, without overpowering the faculties and

the moral principles, may rectify a constitution originally unfavourable to virtue, and may exalt a mind naturally disposed to what is right, to an elevation of principle, and to a correctness and dignity of character which is entirely beyond the comprehension of ordinary and inferior minds. While, on the contrary, a discipline of an opposite kind, and an early frequent exposure to evil impressions may deprive a mind naturally susceptible of the highest excellence of all its amiable and virtuous tendencies, and reduce it to the lowest state of moral degradation. In this view, it may be truly affirmed that the most perfect characters owe their most distinguished excellencies, and their highest attainments, to the goodness of divine providence in placing them in circumstances favourable to moral improvement, and the most enlightened and the most virtuous of mankind will be most ready to adopt the humble language of the apostle, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.'

Nor was any person ever more disposed to make this lowly and devout acknowledgement, than that truly venerable man whose recent removal from this frail and mortal state has given rise to our present meditations. The mind of the late highly revered and most excellent Theophilus Lindsey was cast in the purest moral mould, and his lot was fixed in a situation so favourable that his natural tendencies to rectitude were most successfully drawn forth, invigorated, and improved by the impressions of a virtuous education, and by the judicious and tender assiduity of those eminently pious and benevolent persons to whom was committed the pleasing task of cultivating a soil so richly disposed to reward their labours. The natural result of these combined and inestimable advantages was the early appearance of deeply rooted habits of piety, benevolence, and humility, and of an ardent zeal to promote the knowledge and love of God, and the good of mankind, so that

he might truly say with the pious Israelite, 'I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth.' Of this early tendency to virtue and piety he speaks with great modesty in the affecting narrative which he published of that mental process which led him finally to the resolution of resigning his preferments, and his hopes in the established church. "May I have leave to say without blame, I was impressed from early youth with a love of truth, and virtue, a fear of God, and a desire to approve myself to him, which have never left me to this hour, though not always governed by them, nor improving so great a favour and blessing from God as I ought to have done*."

Upon the private virtues of this excellent man it would be an easy and a pleasing task to descant at large. But so humble-minded was he, so remote from all vanity and ostentation, and so indifferent to human applause,

* The Apology of Theophilus Lindsey, on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick in Yorkshire, c. vi. p. 217, ed. 4.

that I am confident, it would have given pain to his last moments of moral sensibility, if he could have suspected that occasion would be taken from his decease, to pronounce a laboured panegyric upon his virtues. Nor is it necessary to enlarge upon this copious topic. They who once knew him, who admired, revered, and loved him, can never forget the virtues of his heart nor the transcendent excellencies of his character. That deep commanding sense of piety towards God, which was the master-spring of all his actions and the true key to his whole conduct in life, that warm, active, diffusive, disinterested benevolence to mankind, that ardent love of moral and christian truth, that firmness and fortitude in the profession of it, and that generous zeal for its universal promulgation, that candour to the errors and infirmities of others, that exemplary self-government, that gentleness of manners, that humbleness of mind, that meekness of wisdom, that delicate sense of moral rectitude accompanied with the most un-

daunted courage, and the most inflexible resolution in the practice of what he judged to be right, that generous zeal for civil and religious liberty, that magnanimity of soul under losses and persecutions, that cheerful and thankful spirit which never deserted him, that christian patience which no sufferings could exhaust, that entire devotedness to God, that dutiful resignation to his will, and firm confidence in his promises which no adversity could shake, and finally, that dignified simplicity, that unconscious elevation of intellect and principle which is the characteristic of superior minds, this extraordinary assemblage of excellences, alloyed and tarnished with so very few of the failings of humanity, have left an indelible impression upon the hearts of all who had access to his person, and will embalm his name and endear his memory as long as the vital current shall continue to flow.

Nevertheless, I am persuaded, that the light in which it is most useful to contemplate this

venerable confessor, is that in which he appeared most conspicuous to the public eye, and in which, notwithstanding his uncommon modesty and humility, he did not shun to exhibit himself to the world. It is under this character that, being dead, he still speaketh with an emphasis and authority never to be forgotten.

The prominent feature in the life of this excellent man, was the public testimony which he bore to the great doctrine of the divine Unity, by resigning his preferment, and all his prospects of promotion in the established church.

Of other eminent persons who have made similar sacrifices upon the altar of conscience and integrity it might be said, that it is impossible that such persons should not have been provided for in the bosom of the establishment. Their splendid talents would have forced themselves into notice. To have left

such men to languish in penury and obscurity would have been a national disgrace. And would to God, that this reasoning were universally conclusive! But of this venerable confessor it is a known fact, not only that he was actually in possession of valuable preferment, but that he was also zealously patronized by persons of the first distinction, and the most commanding influence, who well knew his talents and his worth, and who were both able and desirous, I may even say, emulous, to advance his interest. Proposals were made to him, which, if he had judged it right to accept them, would infallibly have led to the highest dignities which a splendid establishment has to bestow upon the most favoured and most fortunate of her sons*.

It is also to be remembered that the bitter alternative which apparently awaited him upon the resignation of his preferment, was straitness of circumstances, the desertion and

* See the Memoir in the Appendix.

resentment of friends, and the taunts, the calumnies, and the persecution of enemies. His connexions with the non-conformists were very slender: few of them were capable of appreciating his worth*: and the great body of dissenters would be as little inclined to receive him into communion, as the church from which he had seceded.

In this arduous struggle therefore he stood almost alone. More than a century had elapsed

* In the number of those who understood the value of Mr. Lindsey's character, though differing from him in religious sentiments, was the late reverend, pious, and truly liberal Job Orton, the friend and biographer of Dr. Doddridge, and whom I am proud to have also numbered in the list of the friends and counsellors of earlier life. In one of his letters, published by Mr. Palmer, he thus expresses himself: "Were I to publish an account of ejected and silenced ministers, I should be strongly tempted to insert Mr. Lindsey in the list which he mentions in his Apology, with so much veneration. He certainly deserves as much respect and honour as any one of them, for the part he has acted. Perhaps few of them exceeded him in learning and piety. I venerate him as I would any of your confessors. As to his particular sentiments, they are nothing to me. An honest pious man, who makes such a sacrifice to truth and conscience as he has done, is a glorious character, and deserves the respect, esteem, and veneration of every true Christian." Orton's Letters, vol. ii. p. 159.

since two thousand pious ministers at once *, had voluntarily resigned their preferments and prospects in the church for the sake of a good conscience. But they, though many of them were considerable losers and some were great sufferers, by the largeness of their numbers encouraged and kept each other in countenance; their extraordinary case excited public attention and commiseration, and many thousands of their pious and respectable hearers forsook the church at the same time, and by their sympathy consoled, and by their liberality supported their faithful pastors in the season of trial. At the commencement of the eighteenth century some eminent divines of the established church thought and wrote with great freedom upon theological subjects. But though

* "A long list," says Mr. Lindsey, after having made an extract from Calamy's account of ministers ejected, and silenced for nonconformity,—"a long list, that does honour to human nature, and to our own country in particular, which has hitherto taken the lead in the restoration of God's true religion: for Wickliffe held up the light to Luther that came after him, and may England still hold it up to the rest of the nations!" Apology, p. 223. Note.

of these, some were scrupulous of accepting further preferment which required the renewal of subscription to the doctrinal articles, yet few of them felt themselves under obligation to relinquish their stations in the church. And for almost forty years previous to the resignation of the vicarage of Catterick, though much had been said and written in recommendation of a more catholic and comprehensive system of admission into the church, the lawfulness of clerical conformity had been but little canvassed. In all that period, I believe that one instance, one solitary instance only, that of a most learned, virtuous, and respectable clergyman in Ireland, had occurred, of the resignation of ecclesiastical preferment from a conscientious objection to the terms of conformity *. And this case itself, though in its

* This highly respectable clergyman was the late Dr. William Robertson, who, in January 1760, resigned his living in the diocese of Ferns, in Ireland, and was afterwards chosen to be master of the Free Grammar School at Wolverhampton, where he died in 1783, in the 79th year of his age. In his affecting address to his venerable diocesan, who was very anxious to retain

circumstances extremely interesting, attracted little notice in this country, and its consequences were sufficient to have damped the ardour of a mind less deeply tinctured with a sense of piety, and less resolute in adhering to what was right, than that of our departed

him in the church, and who offered him better preferment in it, he thus expresses himself: "In debating this matter with myself, besides the arguments directly to the purpose, several strong collateral considerations came in upon the positive side of the question. The streightness of my circumstances pressed me close: a numerous family, quite unprovided for, pleaded with the most pathetic and moving eloquence. And the infirmities and wants of age, now coming fast upon me, were urged feelingly. But one single consideration prevailed over all these. That the Creator and Governor of the universe, whom it is my first duty to worship and adore, being the God of truth, it must be disagreeable to him, to profess, subscribe, or declare, in any matter relating to his worship and service, what is not believed strictly and simply to be true." Robertson's Attempt to explain the Words Reason, Substance, &c., p. 241. Mr. Lindsey, in his Apology, p. 239, states the example of Dr. Robertson as operating very strongly on his mind to fix him in his resolution of leaving the church. "The example," says he, "of this excellent person has been a secret reproach to me ever since I heard of it. For I thought, and perhaps justly, that he might not have all the reasons of dislike to our established forms of worship that I had: and though myself, not without unknown straits and difficulties to struggle with, and *not alone* involved in them, yet have I not all those dissuasives and discouragements, that he paints forth in his affecting letter to the bishop of Ferns, subjoined to his instructive and learned work."

friend. But none of these things moved him. He left all and followed Christ. He felt it to be inconsistent with plain duty to continue to officiate in a church, the solemn forms of whose worship were in his estimation repugnant to that fundamental principle of the Jewish and Christian revelation the unity of God, and to the prescribed simplicity of Christian worship. And when after long and painful deliberation, united with fervent supplications for heavenly wisdom, he had at last made up his mind, and had discovered what appeared to him to be the direct line of duty, he then, without hesitation, in opposition to every tie of self-interest, to the remonstrances of his friends, and to the earnest solicitations of his superiors in the church, who with laudable liberality endeavoured by the most plausible arguments, and the kindest persuasion, to obviate his difficulties, to reconcile him to his situation, and to retain within the pale of the church the most exemplary of its ministers: in opposition, I say, to all considerations of this nature, and

listening to the voice of conscience alone, he resigned at once his preferment and his prospects, and descended to a private and a humble station. Thus, like the patriarch of old, he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, with those whom he regarded as true worshipers according to the divine directory of the Scriptures, than to enjoy the highest honours and emoluments which an opulent and dignified establishment could boast, at the expense of peace of conscience, which alone can give sweetness to the comforts of life, and the want of which makes a death-bed terrible.

The picture which this venerable confessor has exhibited of the state of his mind at this interesting period, and of the process of thought and of reasoning by which he was ultimately induced to take this important step, is so natural and affecting, that I need make no apology for introducing an abstract of it, and chiefly in his own words *.

* The succeeding abstract is taken principally from the last chapter of Mr. Lindsey's Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Cat-

He relates that "after the usual time spent at school and the university, he entered into the ministry of the gospel, out of free and deliberate choice, with a full persuasion that it was the best way in which he could serve God, and be useful to men.

"He had always disapproved of some things in the thirty-nine articles of the church, he had not however much examined into the doctrine of the trinity, but supposed all was right there."

"Some years after, many doubts concerning that doctrine sprung up in his mind, which compelled him to a closer study of the Scriptures with regard to it. The more he searched the more he saw the little foundation there was for the doctrine commonly received. And in the end," saith he, "I became fully persuaded that there is but one God, the Father, and he alone to be worshiped." And, "in the course of time his scruples wrought so far as to put

terick, to which therefore it will not be necessary specifically to refer in every paragraph.

him upon actually taking some previous steps with a design to relieve himself, by quitting his preferment in the church." The circumstances which prevented him from immediately executing this resolution he thus ingenuously states.

1. "Being destined early, and educated for the ministry, and his heart engaged in the service, when the moment of determination came, he felt a reluctance at casting himself out of his profession and way of usefulness, which quite discouraged him. I did not," says he, "enough reflect, that the plain road of duty and uprightness will always be found to lead to the truest good in the end.

'God does not need
Either man's work or his own gift. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly. Thousands, at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest.
They also serve, who only stand and wait.'

MILTON.

2. " Many worthy persons, whose opinions varied little from his own, could nevertheless satisfy themselves so as to remain in the church, and to officiate in it. Why then," thought he, " must I alone be so singularly nice and scrupulous, as not to comply with what wiser and better men could accommodate themselves to; but disturb others, and distress myself by enthusiastic fancies purely my own ?"

3. " It was suggested, that he was not the author of the things imposed: that all he did was in submission to civil authority, that he ought not only to leave his benefice but to go out of the world if he expected a perfect state of things. That if there was a general tendency in what was established to serve the interests of virtue and true religion, he ought to rest satisfied, and that in the mean time he had it in his power to prepare men's minds for it whenever there should be a disposition in the state to rectify what was amiss."

These considerations made him for a time tolerably quiet. "Not," saith he, "that I now justify myself herein. Yea rather I condemn myself. But as I have humble hope of the divine forgiveness, let not men be too rigid in their censure. Let those only blame and condemn who know what it is to doubt and to be in perplexity about things of the highest importance: to be in fear of causelessly abandoning a station assigned by Providence, and being found idle and unprofitable, when the Great Master comes to call to account for the talent received."

The ingenuous and honourable mind of this venerable man could not, however, long remain satisfied with such excuses as these. "His great difficulty was the point of worship: in comparison with which, he declares that his subscription to articles gave him very little concern."

And upon this subject he first endeavoured

to satisfy his mind with what is commonly called the Sabellian hypothesis concerning the Trinity, which had been proposed and defended by Dr. Wallis, the Savilian professor of mathematics in the university of Oxford, in opposition to Dr. Sherlock, who supported the doctrine of three distinct infinite minds. The Oxford professor contended, on the contrary, that the Supreme Being bore to his creatures, the three relations of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, which is all that is meant when it is said that God is three persons. And that these three relations no more constitute three Gods, than his being the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, made him three Gods to the Jews.

This strictly Unitarian doctrine, sanctioned by that learned university, for some time quieted the feelings of our departed friend, who relates that he also availed himself of "all opportunities both in public and private to bear testimony to the great truth that *there is but one*

God the Father, with great plainness and without any reserve."

Thus he went on for a considerable time, till, as he expresses it, "from some *providential awakening,* he secretly, but firmly, resolved to seek an opportunity to relinquish his situation in the church."

"Upon further reflection he wondered how he had been able to satisfy his mind so long," with Sabellian qualifications of Trinitarian forms of worship, "or that he could bring himself to imagine that he was worshiping the Father in spirit and in truth, while he was addressing two other persons, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, in terms that implied their personality and deity, as much as that of the Father." And he observes, "that upon the same principles he might justify the deification and the worship of the virgin Mary."

"He could not," he says, "clear himself

from the charge of blameable duplicity in using language in praying to the One God, the Father, which would necessarily be misunderstood by the people who heard him, and would lead them to address their prayers to two other supposed intelligent agents." He also argued in this cogent and conclusive form: "God does not want my sinful act. It would be impious to suppose that he cannot carry on his government without it. But if any thing be evil and odious in his sight, prevarication and falsehood are such. And most of all an habitual course thereof in the most solemn act in which a creature can be engaged, the worship of the holy and all-seeing God,"

He cordially joined in the application of the petitioning clergy for relief in the case of subscription, "hoping that it might lead to still further reformation:" but* "nothing favourable having turned out with regard to the

* Farewell Address to Parishioners at Catterick, p. 7.

great object of worship, he had no choice left, but either to change the public service of the church, and make it such as he could conscientiously officiate in, or quietly to retire." To the former he could not reconcile himself, regarding it as a violation of his solemn engagements when he was admitted to his benefice, and therefore, to use his own impressive language, "upon the most calm and serious deliberation, and weighing of every circumstance, I am obliged to give up my benefice, whatever I suffer by it, unless I would lose all inward peace, and hope of God's favour and acceptance in the end."

Thus did this good and faithful servant of Jesus Christ approve his integrity, by a calm and deliberate surrender of all his earthly possessions, and of all his fair and honourable prospects in life, for the sake of a good conscience, and with the hope of ample compensation hereafter, when he shall be admitted into the joy of his Lord. This memorable

event took place in November 1773, when the venerable confessor was in the fiftieth year of his age.

The motives to this important determination were so pure and disinterested, that they have obtained universal approbation, and persons the most hostile to the principles of this excellent man have borne the most honourable testimony to his character. The reasonableness and propriety of his conduct have been regarded as more problematical.

If indeed the Christian religion were a fable and its promises a jest, to make sacrifices to conscience under the expectation of future reward would be the extreme of folly. But if Christianity be true, and its sanctions divine, and eternal, it must be the highest wisdom to adhere to the doctrine, to imbibe the spirit, and to obey the precepts of the gospel.

Nor can it be justly deemed a question of

trifling concern to ascertain whether the object of religious worship be one, or many. This is a subject which many of the wisest and the best of men in early and in later times have taken great pains to investigate. And our Lord himself has declared, the first of all the commandments is this, 'The Lord our God is One Lord.' And, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.' Erroneous opinions concerning the object of worship fill the mind with confusion and perplexity. And false conceptions of the divine character have a baneful influence upon the moral conduct. For as the god is, such will the devoted worshiper be.

Errors concerning the person of Christ have lain at the foundation of all the corruptions of the Christian doctrine. The pride of heathen philosophy could not submit to acknowledge the authority of a crucified Jew. Ashamed of the humble prophet of Nazareth, it first maintained that he was a man in appearance only,

not in reality. Driven from this wretched and untenable position, it next raised him to the rank of a hero-god, by the invention of a miraculous conception. It then united to his human nature a divine Logos to sustain the part of the Christ. Its next invention was to substitute a created but a super-angelic spirit for the human soul, and to delegate to this exalted creature the creation and the government of the universe. By one gradation more the crucified man was advanced to an equality with the Father himself, the infinite, eternal, and only God. After this the spirit of inspiration was first personified and then deified. Next followed the deification of a woman, the humble and pious mother of Jesus. Then came in an immense train of saints and martyrs, canonized as inferior and tutelar deities, the objects of local and individual worship. Finally the rear of this host of errors is brought up by that paragon of absurdities the transmutation of a morsel of bread into a God, first to be worshiped, and then to be eaten. An

extravagance which far exceeds all the fooleries and fables of pagan mythology.

Thus we see the gradation of error; rising, indeed, from a slender source, but spreading wider, and increasing as it flows, till truth and virtue, religion and common sense, are overwhelmed by the boundless inundation.

These errors were introduced one after another, and passed with little or no notice in the dark and barbarous ages. But when learning began to revive, inquisitive and intelligent men soon perceived that these gross absurdities could not be of divine origin, and mistaking them for the doctrines of Christianity, they of course became unbelievers. The reformation from popery, by correcting the most prominent of these extravagances, gave a seasonable check to the spirit of scepticism. But still, many errors were retained in the reformed churches, and particularly the doctrine of the trinity. And while the doctrine of three equal

divine persons in the unity of the divine essence is regarded as an article of the Christian faith, thinking persons can never reconcile themselves to the Christian religion, but will either secretly or openly become unbelievers. And there is reason to apprehend that in this enlightened and inquisitive age, the doctrine of the trinity, like that of transubstantiation formerly, will, if not removed, weigh down Christianity itself.

It is therefore a great happiness, that in these times there have appeared men of great ability, of eminent piety, of unquestionable integrity, of extensive learning, and of deep research, who having examined the Scriptures with the most serious attention and impartiality, have demonstrated to the satisfaction of reasonable and unprejudiced persons, that Christianity teaches no such strange doctrine as a plurality of gods, or a plurality of persons in the divine essence. On the contrary, that it sets forth in the most explicit language, that to us there is

but One God, even the Father, who is the sole and unrivalled object of religious worship. And it is greatly to their own honour, and of unspeakable advantage to the interest of truth and genuine Christianity, that many of these upright and virtuous inquirers have borne their grave and public testimony, amidst losses and calumnies, dangers and persecutions, to this primary and fundamental truth.

It was therefore an act of superior wisdom, as well as a proof of inflexible integrity, in this venerable confessor, to relinquish his valuable preferment, and his earthly prospects, for the sake of truth and a good conscience: and the consequences of this virtuous self-denial have been most beneficial.

From the village which had been for ten years the scene of his ministerial labours, soon after his resignation he removed to the metropolis, deserted by almost every friend but his conscience and his God.

Excellence so distinguished could not remain long in obscurity. Many respectable persons whose minds were in unison with his own, and many others who, without embracing his opinions, honoured the disinterestedness and magnanimity of his character, visited him in his retirement, and proposed to open a place of worship in which he might officiate, and to form a religious society, the fundamental principle of which should be the worship of the ONE GOD.

"I can never be sufficiently thankful," saith he, (when reviewing these circumstances after an interval of twenty years) "to the bounty of divine providence in raising up a number of serious and generous friends *when alone, and destitute of all means to set on foot this place of worship,* to concur in the design*."

Amidst many difficulties, and not without some danger, this venerable man was enabled

* Farewell Discourse to the Congregation at Essex Street, p. 42.

to open a place of worship upon this spot, within less than twelve months after he had quitted the established church; and so great was the success of his ministry, and the zeal and liberality of his friends, that in a few years afterward he was encouraged and enabled to purchase the premises, and to erect the commodious edifice in which we are now assembled*.

For twenty years he continued to officiate to a most serious, attentive, and affectionate congregation, with great and increasing acceptance and success. Among the number of his stated hearers, he reckoned some persons of high distinction in rank and opulence: and what is of still greater importance, he counted many who were eminent for their knowledge of the Scriptures, for serious and rational piety, and for active and diffusive benevolence, which are the best ornaments of the Christian character.

* See the Memoir of Mr. Lindsey in the Appendix.

While the congregation continued in "this flourishing and harmonious state," to use his own words*, he resigned the office of pastor in the year 1793, in the seventieth year of his age, and the full vigour of his faculties, to the unspeakable regret of his affectionate hearers, and his numerous friends.

The strain of this Christian teacher's public discourses, through the whole course of his ministry, was eminently scriptural, and, in the proper sense of the word, evangelical. He delighted in explaining the New Testament, and in pointing out the practical consequences of the Christian doctrine†. And this he did with a simplicity, a clearness, and an earnestness peculiarly his own, which made its way immediately to the heart, and which can never be forgotten by those who had the happiness of attending upon his ministry.

* Farewell Discourse, p. 41.

† Farewell Address to Parishioners at Catterick, p. 14.

In addition to his public services this excellent man contributed largely to the diffusion of scriptural knowledge, and primitive Christianity, by many learned and judicious publications, in which he established with strength of argument, which bore down all opposition, and with a spirit of humility, of moderation, and of liberality, which won the hearts of his readers, those important doctrines of which the great body of professing Christians seem to have lost sight, but which in his estimation lay at the foundation of all that was excellent and valuable in the Christian religion. And after he had retired from public life, by his conversation and correspondence, by various useful publications, and by unbounded generosity, he continued to exert himself without intermission, in furthering the good cause to which his life was devoted.

A short time previous to his resignation of the pastoral office, he published a new edition

of the Reformed Liturgy in its most improved state. In this edition he made some omissions: particularly of the Creed, commonly, but erroneously styled, The Apostles': the reasons for which alterations and omissions he stated in a discourse which he delivered upon the occasion, and which he afterwards published. This is the Liturgy which, with a very few alterations, chiefly verbal, and all entirely approved and sanctioned by him, is now used in the public services of this chapel. Its great recommendation is, that it is adapted to worship strictly Unitarian, and at the same time recedes no further from the established Liturgy, than that formulary of worship appears to have receded from the simplicity of evangelical truth.

His last work was entitled "Conversations upon the Divine Government, shewing that every Thing is from God, and for Good, to all." This book was published when its venerable author was upon the verge of fourscore. It

contains his last thoughts upon many subjects of great moment: and it seems to have been intended by him as his final testimony to those great and interesting truths, which having long been the object of his faith, the theme of his discourse, and the principle of his conduct, he now felt to be the surest and best foundation of his consolation and his hope.

Infirmities now crowded fast upon him. But he lived to enjoy the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing that the great cause which lay so near his heart, was advancing with accelerated rapidity. That it had begun to take root, and was diffusing itself widely, among the inferior orders of society. That many had been convinced by his arguments, and encouraged by his example to avow truth at all hazards, and some even to quit situations of honour, and usefulness, to which they were bound by many ties of interest and affection, in order to bear their firm and public testimony to the important truth, that "*the Father alone*

is God, and he only is to be worshiped." He had the pleasure to know that this great doctrine was professed and taught not only in this place and in the vicinage of the metropolis, but that in many other towns in England, there were numerous and flourishing societies of Christians who hold and profess the same fundamental truth. That the great cause is not without advocates in North Britain, in Ireland, in America, on the continent of Europe, and even in France, where religious toleration exists under the grinding yoke of military despotism. Also, that this glorious cause was gaining proselytes every day of persons who understood their principles, and whose characters were an ornament to their profession. It added greatly to the satisfaction of his declining years to see that this Christian society which had been founded by himself; for the success of which he was so deeply interested, and which he had left so "flourishing and harmonious," continued still in a prosperous and a promising state. And particu-

larly that it contained so many young persons who were thirsting after scriptural knowledge, and who were solicitously inquiring for divine truth. And finally, it constituted one of the most valued comforts of his closing scene, that he had lived to see the completion of the Improved Version of the New Testament, a work upon the accomplishment of which he had fixed his mind, to the expense of which he had contributed with generous munificence, and to the execution of which, though it is much to be lamented that his personal exertions were wanting, in consequence of age and infirmity, yet his valuable publications yielded large and essential aid. This was the work which he cherished to his latest breath. It was the only reading which interested him for many of the latest weeks of his life: and the very evening before he was confined to that bed of sickness from which he rose no more, but a very few days previous to the final dissolution of his feeble frame, he desired to hear, and was pleased and gratified in attend-

ing to some portions of the New Testament which were read to him by a friend.

Such was the virtuous and honourable tenor, and such the peaceful close of the life of this sincere and exemplary Christian, this faithful pastor, this holy and venerable confessor; whose character, by the unanimous suffrage of all who had the happiness of intimate access to him, is allowed to have been as free from blemish, and to have approached as near to perfection, as human frailty would admit, or as that of any individual since the apostolic age.

He is now at rest from his labours—and if there is truth in a divine promise, his works shall follow him. This good and faithful servant shall in due time enter into the joy of his Lord, and shall shine as a star of the first magnitude, and of distinguished glory in the kingdom of God.

Beloved, venerable friend, Farewell. To

have been admitted as an associate in labour, and in friendship, with thee, and with thy most worthy and revered coadjutor Dr. Priestley, has been the chief privilege of my life. To have paid this last tribute of affection and homage to thy memory and thy virtues, has been the most honourable office in which I could engage. And to be united again to the same society, and in the same employments, in a better and happier state, is the sublimest felicity to which I aspire.

What then remains, but that we all who are acquainted with the character of this venerable man, those especially who were delighted and instructed by his public ministry, and most of all, those of us who having been honoured with his friendship were daily edified by his example, immediately set ourselves with greater earnestness than ever, to practise the instructions of our revered teacher and friend, to imitate his virtues, and, in our respective

spheres, to be followers of him, as he was of Christ.

Thus shall we best express our veneration for his character, and bear the most rational and honourable testimony to his excellences and virtues. And thus shall we lay a sure foundation, through the mercy of God, of renewed intercourse with our departed instructor, and of the perpetual and delightful enjoyment of his society and friendship, together with that of all the wise and good in all ages and countries, in a state where imperfection and suffering shall have no place, and where distinguished virtue shall receive its appropriate and everlasting reward.

THE END.

THE

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

O God! the God of hope, of peace, and of consolation! We bless thee for the glorious and delightful views which the Gospel of Jesus hath opened to us beyond death and the grave: that we are not ignorant concerning those who are asleep: that amidst the vicissitudes of life, and in the bereavements of death, we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

We adore thy providence in the removal of thine aged servant from a state of infirmity and suffering, to that safe and peaceful mansion where the weary are at rest, in sure and certain hope of a glorious morning, when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and when the good and faithful servant shall be summoned into the presence of his

Master, to behold his glory, and to participate in his everlasting triumph.

We bless thee, O God, that thy servant was permitted for so long a time to bear his firm and public testimony to important truth: that he was so long continued as a burning and a shining light, in which many had reason to rejoice: and that being dead he yet speaketh. Oh, let him not speak from the grave in vain. May the wisdom of his instructions, and the virtues of his character, his holy and blameless life, and his pious and peaceful end, still be the means of enlightening and convincing many; and of confirming those who are already well-instructed in their adherence to truth, and in the practice of virtue!

And may the great cause to which his life was devoted, and for the sake of which he made such important sacrifices, continue to prosper under the divine blessing! Whereso-ever the doctrine of the ONE true and living

God, and of his faithful and honoured servant and messenger Jesus Christ, is published, may it be cordially received, and practically cherished. May the worshipers of the One God even the Father, through the one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, manifest the excellence and efficacy of their faith, by the holiness of their lives. May they never be ashamed of the doctrine of their divine Master, lest he also, another day, be ashamed of them.

May thy kingdom come. May the light of truth spread rapidly through the world. And from one end of the earth to the other may the name of the Lord be one, and his praise one.

We sympathize with mourning relatives. May the balm of divine consolation be poured into the wounded spirit. And may those anxious and active cares, which have been exerted with such unwearied assiduity in soothing and softening the sufferings of frail humanity, sub-

side into calm and dutiful resignation to thy disposing will: and into patient joyful expectation, of that glorious period, when virtuous friends and relatives shall meet again, in the full vigour of their intellectual and moral powers, perfect in holiness, in love, and in happiness, released from all the frailties and sufferings of mortality, and where the anguish of separation shall be felt no more. Thanks be to God, who thus giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise, living, and true God be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.

APPENDIX.

MEMOIR

OF

THE REVEREND THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, M.A.

THE reverend Theophilus Lindsey was born at Middlewich in Cheshire, June 20, 1723, O.S. His father Robert Lindsey, descended from an ancient family in Scotland, was a mercer in that town, and also possessed a lucrative concern in the salt-works which are carried on in the neighbourhood. He was a man of excellent character, and at one time in affluent circumstances; but his property was considerably reduced by the imprudence and extravagance of an elder son, by his first wife, whom he had admitted to a share in his business. His second wife was a lady of most exemplary character. Her maiden name was Spencer; she was distantly related to the Marlborough family, and previously to her marriage she had lived twenty-one years with

Frances, Countess of Huntingdon. By Mr. Lindsey she had three children. The eldest, Frances, a daughter, was born A.D. 1720: she was married to Mr. Harrison, a farmer in Leicestershire, and is now living, a widow in a very infirm state. The second, a son named Francis, born in 1722, was apprentice to a surgeon at Middlewich, and was unfortunately killed when he was seventeen years of age, by his companion, whose fowling-piece went off as he was getting through a hedge. The third was Theophilus, the subject of this memoir, who was named after the Earl of Huntingdon. Having given early indications of an amiable and serious disposition, and of a taste for learning, in which he had made considerable progress for his years, at a school near Middlewich, he, when very young, attracted the notice of Lady Betty and Lady Ann Hastings, who took him under their patronage, and who continued through life to behave to him with maternal kindness. By them he was sent to the free grammar school at Leeds, then under the care of the Rev. Mr. Barnard, of whose learning and piety Mr. Lindsey used always to express himself in terms of the highest approbation; and to whose skilful instructions and paternal attention he gratefully acknowledged

himself as indebted, not only for the progress which he made in learning, but still more for his early and deep sense of religion, his supreme love of truth, and his fixed habits of virtue. His vacations were usually spent with his noble patronesses, in the vicinity of Leeds, and after the decease of Lady Betty, with Lady Ann Hastings, at Ashby Place, near Ashby-de-la-zouch in Leicestershire*.

Having finished his education at school, he

* Mr. Lindsey's father died at Middlewich, in 1742. After his decease his widow and daughter were taken into the family of Lady Ann Hastings, at Ashby Place. Mrs. Lindsey resided with her noble friend till her decease in the year 1747, having lived to enjoy the gratification of the first wish of her heart, that of seeing her son in the pulpit. She was buried in Ashby churchyard, where a neat monument was erected to her memory by Lady Ann, on which it is recorded that she, while a child, had been the play-fellow, and a widow, the friend of Lady Ann Hastings, who was a sincere and affectionate mourner for her death.

Mr. Robert Lindsey had four children by his first wife. The eldest was John, born 1707, who by his extravagance reduced his father to difficulties. The second, Mary, born in 1713, of whom no account is preserved. The third, Thomas, born in 1715, died an infant. The fourth, Joseph, born 1716, went to sea and was drowned. Mrs. Mary Lindsey, the first wife of Mr. Robert Lindsey, was buried December 28, 1718, O.S.

These dates were taken from the parish register of Middlewich, and some of the circumstances were communicated by some old and respectable inhabitants of that town, who remember the family, and of whom inquiry was made by a friend in that neighbourhood, who very obligingly and readily complied with my request for this purpose.

entered as a student at St. John's College in the University of Cambridge. Here he passed through his course, and took his degrees with high reputation, and was elected a Fellow of the College. It was in his power to have attained considerable distinction in the department of literature, but his great ambition was to be a minister of the gospel. Accordingly, he relates, "that after the usual time spent at school and in the University, he entered into the ministry of the gospel, out of a free and deliberate choice, and with an earnest desire to promote the great ends of it."

Having taken Orders, according to the prescribed form of the established church, he was presented, in the twenty-third year of his age, by Sir George Wheeler, of Otterden, in Kent, a near relation of the Huntingdon family, with the chapel in Spital Square, a peculiar in the diocese of London.

A short time afterward, at the recommendation of Francis Earl of Huntingdon, he was taken into the family of Algernon Duke of Somerset, who had lately succeeded to the title and estate, and who was desirous of a clergyman of good talents and character to reside in his family as a chaplain and a friend. In Mr. Lindsey he found all that he wished: and

for the short remainder of the life of that amiable nobleman they lived together in the greatest harmony, and indeed, intimacy. After the decease of the Duke of Somerset, Mr. Lindsey continued to reside in the house as chaplain to the Duchess, who is better known to the public as the Countess of Hertford, the celebrated patroness of virtue, literature, and religion. At her desire he accompanied her grandson, the present Duke of Northumberland, then nine years of age, who was ordered to go to the continent for the benefit of his health: and of his assiduous and kind attention as a tutor and a guardian that illustrious nobleman still retains a grateful recollection, of which he has given substantial proof. After two years, his noble pupil's health being re-established, Mr. Lindsey returned with him to England, about the year 1753, when this noble family were desirous still to retain him with them as tutor to Lord Percy. This honour, however, he thought proper to decline, preferring a settlement as a parochial clergyman, which was the object to which his life was devoted. The late Duke of Northumberland therefore presented him with the valuable living of Kirby Wisk in Yorkshire, to hold at first only for a time, but afterward,

upon the death of the person for whom it was intended, for life. During his residence in Yorkshire, he was first introduced to the family of the learned and celebrated Archdeacon Blackburne: an event upon which he had afterward so much reason to congratulate himself. The Huntingdon family being unwilling that any but themselves should share the honour of providing for Mr. Lindsey, at their request he removed from Kirby Wisk, to Piddletown in Dorsetshire, a valuable living in the gift of that noble family. Here he resided about seven years: and it was at this time that his scruples concerning clerical conformity first arose: which however he silenced by the considerations which he has so ingenuously stated in his Apology, and with which he was afterward so little satisfied.

While Mr. Lindsey was minister of this parish he married Miss Hannah Elsworth, a stepdaughter of Archdeacon Blackburne, September 29, 1760. Upon the talents, accomplishments, and virtues of this extraordinary lady it would be a pleasure to expatiate. But let it suffice to say that she was in all respects worthy to be the consort of the venerable Theophilus Lindsey. This lady survives her excellent husband, whose latest articulation

was an acknowledgement of her kind attention to him: a sentiment which his looks continued to express when the organs of speech refused their office. It is greatly to be desired, that her health and vigour, much impaired by unceasing assiduity for years past to alleviate the growing infirmities of Mr. Lindsey, may for the sake of many be restored and preserved: and that the energies of her active and powerful mind may long continue to be exerted for the only object which makes life desirable to her, promoting truth and doing good.

It was probably owing in some considerable degree to his rising difficulties concerning clerical conformity, as well as to his love of retirement, and his attachment to the duties of a parochial minister, that Mr. Lindsey was induced, while he resided in Dorsetshire, to decline the handsome offer made by the Duke of Northumberland, upon his appointment to be Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in a letter from the Duchess to Mr. Lindsey, to be one of his chaplains, and, together with Mrs. Lindsey, to accompany the Duke and Duchess to Ireland, and to reside with them in the Castle of Dublin, till such preferment should offer as he would choose to accept. The person (Dr.

Dodgson) who was made chaplain upon Mr. Lindsey's refusal, was first appointed bishop of Ossory, and afterward of Elphin; and there can be no doubt that Mr. Lindsey, if he had desired it, would have risen at least to an equal station in the church.

The vicarage of Catterick in Yorkshire became vacant in 1763, by the decease of its worthy incumbent Mr. Harrison. This gentleman was the father of Mrs. Catherine Cappe, of York, widow of the late Newcome Cappe, well known to the public by various works, which equally display the superiority of her understanding, the ardour of her piety, and the benevolence of her heart. This lady was the early intimate and faithful friend of Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey, and, to her honour be it spoken, almost alone remained firmly attached to them in their change of circumstances. In order to be near Archdeacon Blackburne's family and other intelligent and valuable friends, Mr. Lindsey, by the interest of Lord Huntingdon, obtained permission to exchange his living in Dorsetshire, for the vicarage of Catterick.

In this situation he remained for ten years, respected and beloved by his parishioners, anxiously solicitous for their spiritual welfare,

diligently instructing them in the Christian Scriptures, and in their moral duties, and spending the whole of his income among them "for their present benefit and future happiness, seeking not theirs but them." Here he proposed "quietly to have ended his days," seeking no further preferment, nor accepting any if it should be offered*.

It was during his residence at Catterick that Mr. Lindsey became acquainted with Dr. Priestley, to whom he was first introduced at Archdeacon Blackburne's house, with whom he contracted an intimate friendship, founded upon a congeniality of principles and views, which was a great source of mutual happiness, which lasted without abatement or interruption till death, and which will doubtless be again renewed in a state, in which their noble and generous designs and exertions, so much beyond the comprehension of low and vulgar minds, shall meet with due honour and reward, and where the tongue of calumny, and the hand of violence, shall never more be permitted to disturb their peace.

While Mr. Lindsey continued the minister of Catterick his difficulties upon the subject of clerical conformity began to revive. And

* See his Farewell Address to the Parishioners at Catterick.

having been overtaken by a dangerous sickness, his virtuous mind was troubled by the apprehension of appearing in the presence of God, under the character of one who had *prevaricated* in the most solemn acts of worship*. This induced him to resolve upon seeking the earliest opportunity after he recovered, of relinquishing his situation in the church which was now become insupportable to him. In his Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, he has given a most interesting delineation of the feelings, and the progress of his mind upon this trying occasion.

Mr. Lindsey engaged with great ardour and activity in promoting the petition which was presented to Parliament in the spring of 1772, signed by many respectable clergymen, the object of which was to obtain relief in the matter of subscription to the thirty-nine articles. This application though ably supported in the house of Commons, and particularly by that illustrious patriot Sir George Savile, met with the fate which it was natural to expect. Had the prayer of the petition been granted, it would by no means have removed Mr. Lindsey's scruples, who acknowledges that he and some others, "engaged in this petition, in hope that it

* See Apology, p. 233.

would lead to an amendment of many things in the Liturgy*."

After the defeat of this last attempt at reformation, Mr. Lindsey had no other inducement to remain in the church. In the month of November, therefore, in the year 1773, he resigned his preferment into the hands of his learned and respectable diocesan, Dr. Markham, afterwards archbishop of York. With this amiable prelate he had held a previous correspondence upon the subject, and many arguments and much kind persuasion had been used by him to obviate Mr. Lindsey's scruples and to retain him in the church. And after his resignation, the bishop acknowledged with regret, that he had lost the most exemplary parochial minister in his diocese.

This excellent man had no sooner relinquished his situation in the church, than, like others in similar circumstances, he found the step which he had taken to be attended with consequences which, probably, he did not expect. He was apprised that he was resigning affluence for poverty. But he also discovered that by his former friends he was now almost entirely deserted: and that some, from whom better things might reasonably have been ex-

* See the Farewell Address to the Parishioners at Catterick.

pected, were loud and vehement in their invectives against him, for a measure which was entitled to unqualified praise. But this improper conduct on their part did not ruffle the composure of his mind, nor excite even a momentary regret. He was firmly supported by the testimony of his conscience, and could look with compassion upon his enemies, persecutors, and slanderers.

Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey soon afterwards removed to London, where they were hospitably received by that excellent, learned, and truly liberal man the late Dr. Ramsden, afterward Master of the Charter House, with whom they resided for a short time, till they provided themselves with a small lodging in Featherstone Buildings, Holborn.

Here they were soon visited by many respectable persons, who expressed their earnest desire for the opening of a place of worship upon principles avowedly Unitarian. And by the kind and indefatigable exertions of a friend, they were enabled first to hire, and ultimately to purchase the commodious premises where the chapel is now erected.

Mr. Lindsey preached his first sermon at Essex House April 17, 1774, from Ephesians iv. 3. "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the

spirit in the bond of peace." The discourse, with the devotional services, was printed, and has passed through three editions. The new chapel was opened March 29, 1778, with a very excellent appropriate discourse upon the Unity of God, and the simplicity of divine worship, from John iv. 23, 24. This sermon also, with the devotional forms which accompanied it, was published.

Mr. Lindsey officiated as sole pastor of an affectionate and flourishing society for about twelve years, when at his desire Dr. Disney was chosen to be his assistant: in connexion with whom he continued his ministerial labours for eight years longer; and in July 1793 he resigned his charge and withdrew entirely from public service. Upon this interesting occasion he published a Discourse addressed to the congregation, "which was at first intended to have been delivered from the pulpit, but he found himself too tenderly impressed to be capable of personally addressing his friends with any degree of vigour*." The text is from Matt. vi. 10. "Thy kingdom come." The design of this admirable discourse is to show, "the great importance of the principle of the

* See the Advertisement to the Discourse.

divine unity which binds and unites us together, and the relation it bears to virtuous practice," and that the principal obstruction to the progress of the gospel arises from the great errors which prevail in the Christian world concerning the unity of God, and the object of religious worship.

The first time that the author of this memoir had the honour of being introduced to Mr. Lindsey was in March 1789, when he was about to resign an important and on many accounts agreeable situation, in consequence of a change (by him very unlooked for) in his theological sentiments. By the influence and exertions of many liberal friends he was invited to a department in the New College at Hackney: an office which he accepted with the greater alacrity for the opportunity which it afforded of cultivating the friendship of Mr. Lindsey. In the year 1791 Dr. Priestley, having been driven from Birmingham by the disgraceful riots, was chosen by the congregation at Hackney to succeed Dr. Price, a man whose character is above all praise. While this extraordinary and much-injured man continued to reside at Hackney, the interviews of those friends who thought and felt so much alike upon the most

important subjects were frequent, and in a high degree interesting and improving. But this happiness was of short duration. In the spring of 1794 Dr. Priestley embarked for America: after which, his correspondence, though frequent and regular, but ill supplied the chasm which was occasioned by the loss of his conversation. Such however was the will of divine providence, and the beneficial consequences are already apparent. The emigration of Dr. Priestley to the Western Continent has been the means of exciting attention to the subject of rational Christianity where it was before but little known. The success has already been great beyond expectation. Societies for Unitarian worship are already established in Massachusets, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania. And as in that extensive empire no restraint is imposed upon freedom of inquiry, it cannot be doubted that truth will eventually, and perhaps speedily, be triumphant.

Mr. Lindsey, after his resignation in 1793, continued for some years to enjoy an uncommon portion of health, vigour, and activity, and that uniform flow of cheerfulness which is the natural result of a good constitution, and of the recollections of a well-spent life.

He seemed almost to be privileged with exemption from the infirmities of age. The first alarm was excited in the spring of 1801, when Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey were upon a visit for a few days at the seat of their learned and estimable friend Francis Maseres, esq. Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer. The weather being uncommonly warm for the season, Mr. Lindsey experienced a slight paralytic affection on one side, which however disappeared in a very short time. But the latter end of December in the same year he suffered a severe stroke, which at first excited the greatest apprehension. From this indeed he soon recovered surprisingly, so as to be able to finish his last interesting work, viz. Conversations upon the Divine Government. After this seizure he gradually declined in bodily strength and vigour, though he was free from pain, and his faculties remained unimpaired.

In this state of increasing debility a circumstance occurred which appeared for a time to infuse fresh vigour into his frame, and almost to add a new term to his life. This was the very lively interest which he took in the appointment of the writer of this memoir to be the officiating minister at the Chapel in Essex Street upon the resignation of Dr. Dis-

ney in the spring of 1805. Upon this occasion he again resumed his seat in the chapel, from which he had for some time withdrawn on account of his declining health.

He continued his attendance on public worship upwards of two years, till the first Sunday in November 1807, after which the state of his health compelled him finally, but reluctantly, to withdraw. His strength now rapidly declined, and his infirmities increased upon him. But though at times he suffered considerably, yet through the constant attention and great professional skill of a medical friend, and the unwearied and judicious exertions of Mrs. Lindsey and her attendants, his sufferings were greatly mitigated, and he continued upon the whole in a comfortable state, so that to the last week of his life he enjoyed the company of his friends, though he was not able to support much conversation with them. Mr. Lindsey declined so rapidly through the summer, that no hope was entertained that he would be able to struggle through the winter. But no symptom of immediate danger appeared till the latter end of October, when he was attacked with an oppression upon the brain. And though

this complaint yielded in some degree to the application of leeches and blisters, yet it was attended with a considerable degree of fever, which obliged him on Thursday 27th to take to his bed, where he remained apparently without suffering much violent pain, generally in a comatose state, taking little notice of any thing, and speaking but little, till Thursday the third of November, when he expired at six o'clock in the evening without a struggle or a groan. His remains were interred in Bunhill Fields, according to his own direction in the most private manner, at eleven o'clock in the morning of Friday the eleventh of the same month. Though by particular desire no person joined the procession, yet many of his friends, and some from considerable distances, showed their respect to his memory by attending at the grave.

The following is a catalogue of Mr. Lindsey's publications.

1. A Farewell Address to the Parishioners at Catterick.

2. An Apology on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick.

3. A Sequel to the Apology.

4. A Sermon preached at the Opening of the Chapel in Essex Street, April 17, 1774.

5. The Book of Common Prayer Reformed for the Use of the Chapel in Essex Street, with Hymns.

6. A Sermon preached in Essex Street on Opening the New Chapel, March 29, 1778.

7. Two Dissertations. First, On the Preface to St. John's Gospel:—Secondly, On Praying to Christ.

8. The Catechist, or An Inquiry concerning the only true God, and Object of Worship.

9. An Historical View of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine and Worship.

10. *Vindiciæ Priestleianæ.* An Address to the Students of Oxford and Cambridge.

11. A Second Address to the same.

12. An Examination of Mr. Robinson's Plea for the Divinity of Christ.

13. A List of false Readings, and Mistranslations of the Scriptures.

14. Considerations on the Expediency of revising the Liturgy, by a Consistent Protestant, 1790.

15. Conversations on Christian Idolatry.

16. A Sermon on Forms of Prayer.

17. A Sermon addressed to the Congregation in Essex Street on resigning the Pastoral Office among them.

18. Conversations on the Divine Government, showing that every thing is from God and for Good to all, 1802.

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Belsham, Thomas, 1750-1829.
A sermon occasioned by the death of the

Belsham, Thomas, 1750-1829.
A sermon occasioned by the death of the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, M. A., preached at the Chapel in Essex Street, Strand, November 13th, 1808. To which is added, a brief biographical memoir. London, Printed for J. Johnson by Richard Taylor, 1808.
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"A catalogue of Mr. Lindsey's publications": p.68-70.

1. Lindsey, Theophilus, 1723-1808.
2. Unitarian churches--Sermons.

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